

## Message Text

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65

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAB-01

AID-05 IO-10 OMB-01 ACDA-05 /079 W

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R 211245Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5853

INFO PANCANAL

USCINCSO

AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PN

SUBJECT: TREATY NEGOTIATIONS: PUBLIC AND PRESS REACTION

SUMMARY: MEDIA AND PUBLIC ATTENTION THIS WEEK FOCUSED ON THE CANAL AND THE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS, STUDENT ACTIVITIES SYMBOLICALLY REPUDIATING THE 1903 CANAL TREATY, AND A RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE SECOND NATIONAL CONGRESS OF CATHOLIC WOMEN REAFFIRMING PANAMANIAN SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE CANAL. AMBASSADOR BUNKER'S PLANNED ARRIVAL WAS ANNOUNCED NOVEMBER 16 IN THE SUNDAY EDITION OF "EL PANAMA AMERICA". THE PRESS NOVEMBER 20 REPORTED HIS ARRIVAL THE EVENING BEFORE. ALL INDICATIONS POINT TOWARD A TRANQUIL PUBLIC MOOD DURING THIS NEGOTIATING SESSION. END SUMMARY.

1. THE PRO-GOP NEWSPAPER "CRITICA" NOVEMBER 18 WAS ONLY LOCAL DAILY TO FRONT-PAGE MEXICAN NEWSPAPER "EXCELSIOR"'S INTERVIEW WITH PANAMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY ADVISOR JULIO YAU. LATTER WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THE UNITED STATES IS CURRENTLY ATTEMPTING TO EFFECT THE OVERTHROW OF CHIEF OF GOVERNMENT TORRIJOS. ACCORDING  
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TO YAU THE UNITED STATES HAS DEADLOCKED THE TREATY

NEGOTIATIONS, AND NOW HOPES TO INITIATE A DESTABILIZING PROCESS IN PANAMA AKIN TO THAT WHICH LED TO CHILEAN PRESIDENT SALVADOR ALLENDE'S DOWNFALL. YAU ADDED THAT WIDE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND PANAMA EXIST OVER FUTURE CONTROL OF THE CANAL; WHEREAS PANAMA WANTS THE UNITED STATES OUT OF THE CANAL ZONE BY THE END OF THIS CENTURY IF NOT BEFORE, THE UNITED STATES SEEKS A MINIMUM OF 50 YEARS ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL OF THE CANAL AND PERMANENT CONTROL OF ALL 14 EXISTING BASES. IN CONTRAST, PANAMA WANTS IMMEDIATE ELIMINATION OF 11 OF THESE BASES, WITH JOINING CONTROL OVER THE REMAINING THREE. UNITED STATES INSISTENCE ON THE BASES, "OTHER DEFENSE AGENCIES", AND CONTROL OF 85 PERCENT OF THE CANAL ZONE ARE UNACCEPTABLE DEMANDS UPON PANAMA AND FOR THIS REASON THE UNITED STATES WISHES TO OVERTHROW THE TORRIJIS REGIME. (FOR FULL TEXT OF INTERVIEW VIA HAVANA PRELA SEE FBIS PA18002Y)

3. ALL MORNING NEWSPAPERS OF NOVEMBER 18 CARRIED ARTICLES DESCRIBING ACTIVITIES OF THAT DAY TO SYMBOLICALLY REPUDIATE THE HAY-BUNEAU VARILLA TREATY OF NOV. 18, 1903. THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS AND HAS GIVEN SUPPORT TO ACTIVITIES ON THE PART OF STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND MINISTRY OFFICIALS IN THAT REGARD WHICH INCLUDED ONE MINUTE OF SILENCE AND THE BURNING OF COPIES OF THE 1903 TREATY IN ALL OF THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF PANAMA. REPUDIATION OF THE 1903 TREATY WAS ALSO THEME OF NOV. 18 NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS. (SEE ALSO FBIS PA181618Y) NEWSPAPERS COVERED THE SECOND NATIONAL CONGRESS OF CATHOLIC WOMEN WHICH ENDED ON NOV. 16 IN PANAMA WITH PASSAGE OF A RESOLUTION REAFFIRMING PANAMANIAN SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE CANAL.

4. GOP OFFICIALS HAVE INFORMED US THAT THEY INTEND TO GIVE ONLY ROUTINE COVERAGE TO THE PRESENT NEGOTIATING VISIT IN ORDER NOT TO AROUSE PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS THAT DRAMATIC PROGRESS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS MIGHT BE FORTHCOMING. THEY ALSO HAVE PROFESSED EMBARRASSMENT OVER YAU'S WORDS. TORRIJOS, INFORMATION COORDINATOR FOR CANAL TREATY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NEGOTIATORS, FABIAN VELARDE TOLD POLITICAL COUNSELOR THAT YAU'S WORDS HAD NOT BEEN CLEARED BY ANYONE. MINISTER NEGOTIATOR-TACK TOLD US THAT YAU HAD DEPARTED FROM ESTABLISHED GUIDANCE AND THAT YAU IS "ALREADY SORRY," IMPLYING THAT HE HAD BEEN CHASTIZED. THIS MAY HAVE BEEN IN PART A RESULT OF STRONG PROTEST REGARDING YAU'S STATEMENT MADE BY AMBASSADOR TO FOREIGN MINISTER OZORE'S IN A PERSONAL NOTE TO THE MINISTER.

5. COMMENT: GOP APPEARS DETERMINED TO MAINTAIN CALM  
PUBLIC ATMOSPHERE FOR THIS ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS. THUS  
FAR, CIRCUMSTANCES ALSO APPEAR FAVORABLE FOR KEEPING  
TRANQUILITY.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, NEGOTIATIONS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES, VISITS, POLITICAL SITUATION  
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**TAGS:** PINT, PN, PQ, US  
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